THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) and (b) Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe and Other Backward Class category of candidates have been getting fellowships on the basis of National Eligibility Test (NET) conducted jointly by Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR) and University Grants Commission (UGC) for award of Junior Research Fellowships (JRF). SC/ST candidates get a special consideration in qualifying marks in the test for award of Fellowships. The total number of candidates who got the fellowships, separately for each category during the last three years is as follows:

	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
SCs	381	368	352
STs	117	93	67
OBCs*	369	399	307

(*does not include fellowships awarded by UGC as they do not maintain data for OBC candidates)

National Overseas Scholarship for SC/ST etc. candidates is implemented by the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment and Ministry of Tribal Affairs. In total 30 awards are offered in a year to SC/ST etc. candidates for pursuing higher studies abroad. The awards under the scheme are in specified fields of science, engineering and technology. During the last three years, 20 SC candidates have been awarded scholarship under the scheme.

(c) and (d) With a view to increase the Fellowships for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, two new schemes namely Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes have been introduced from the year 2005-06 to provide 1333 and 667 fellowships to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes respectively. Also 100 Research Associateships for SC/ST were introduced recently.

Bill to safeguard interests of old parents

175. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that her Ministry is going to bring a Bill before the Parliament to prevent children from casting away their parents;

(b) the legal framework that her Ministry is proposing, through the proposed Bill, to protect the parents; and

(c) the number of elderly people living in the country, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Madam. The Bill is under preparation.

(c) The information is available at the website *www.censusindia.net* and in the book "Tables on Census 2001" published by the Office of Registrar General, India.

Demand for equipment in District Disability Rehabilitation Centres

176. SHRI TARIQ ANWAR: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the status of demand and supply of supporting equipment for handicapped persons from District Disability Rehabilitation Centres in Bihar and Maharashtra during the year 2004-05 and 2005-06;

(b) the measures taken to ensure the supply of equipment as per the demand; and

(c) the details of the camps organized to provide handicap supporting equipment in Bihar and Maharashtra during the last three years, location-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) and (b) District Disability Rehabilitation Centres (DDRCs) of Maharashtra and Bihar have been provided aids and appliances by the National Institutes and Artificial Limb Manufacturing Corporation (ALIMCO) as per their requirements.

(c) During the last three years, 90 camps in Bihar and 197 camps in Maharashtra have been organized.

Camps in Bihar have been organized in the districts of Bhagalpur, Buxar, Bhojpur, Banka, Jahanabad, Kaimur, Khagaria, Kishanganj, Munger, Muzaffarpur, Nalanda, Nawada, Patna, Purnia, Rohtas, Saran, Shekhpura, Sheohar, Sitamarhi, Siwan, Samastipur, East Champaran, West Champaran and Vaishali.

Camps in Maharashtra have been organized in the districts of Ahmednagar, Aurangabad, Beed, Dhule, Jalgaon, Kolhapur, Latur, Mumbai City, Nasik, Ratnagiri, Singhudurg, Thane and Yavatmal.